Managing perfectionism: good or bad?

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Are you a self-confessed perfectionist? Or have you never really thought about it? Maybe you have relied on working in a certain way which has worked for you in the past, but now seems to be holding you back and tripping you up. Do you recognize feeling that to be a good veterinary surgeon you need to do everything exactly how you have been taught, to control all the elements of every task — but rarely is there enough time (or do you have enough energy) to do this. The consequence is you feel like you are failing, you are unable to switch off, you fear making a mistake and are unable to delegate tasks — as if you hold on to them at least you know they are done properly!

If you recognize these thoughts and feelings then you are not alone. During this session we will look at what perfectionism is, how it can help us to a point and when it becomes a maladaptive coping strategy to the pressures we are under. We will look at practical tools to stop, reflect and reframe some of your habits to ensure you are working in a healthy way that works for you now and in the future.

KEY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand what perfectionism is and how it can both help and hinder us
- Identify signs of adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism
- Learn how to manage your perfectionism tendencies to thrive at work and life

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is true about adaptive perfectionists?
(A) Are able to accept small failures
(B) Always set unachievable goals
(C) Are self-critical
(D) Like only to be in their comfort zone
2. Which of the following is true about maladaptive perfectionists?
(A) Have a healthy approach to making mistakes
(B) Are harshly self-critical
(C) Ask for help and seek advice
(D) Demonstrate high levels of self-confidence
3. What do techniques for managing perfectionism include?
(A) Focus on working alone
(B) Ask for feedback from colleagues and discuss mistakes as a team
(C) Be suspicious of other people's behaviour
(D) Set stretching goals in all areas of your life